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FIN DE SIECLE GRATITUDE.

We're glad that we live at the end of the cycle
On the apex of all time;
John Hans, Giovanni, Jean, Ivan and Michael
Of whatever land and clime.
But we stand on the crest of a tumulous terror
That bares its heart to the moon,
Of the bones of men through the ages of error,
Of the fellows who died too soon.

So a vote of thanks to these premature fellows
Is a graceful thing to give,
For they were the fellows who blew the bellows
That the flame of hope might live.
They lived on roots and they dwelt in caverns
With a bear skin for a robe
That we might lounge in ten-dollar taverns
And read the "Daily Globe."

They lived on roots that the fair potato
Might gladden our boards to-day,
And they fought with spear that we might read Plato,
And hear Paderewsky play.
They fought the snake and the bear and the bison
And things that bite and sting.
That we might range to the broad horizon
And fera no living thing.

So thanks to the men who are buried under
The years that have passed away,
For they are the men who stored with thunder
The dynamo of to-day,
Of their pyramid of bones, on the crest of existence,
We take the present's boon
And thank those fellows way back in the distance—
The fellows who died too soon.,
—Yankee Blade.

A DARING DEED.

When H. M. sloop of war "Centaur," toward the end of her cruise off the African coast, stopped at Sierra Leone, and the captain's daughter, Grace Manton, a beautiful girl of 15, who had been staying at the settlement with her uncle, was taken aboard for her passage home, there was no end to the prinking among the midshipmen, all of whom were anxious to show off to the best advantage before the young lady.

The old quartermasters aft looked at each other with grim amusement when even little "reefers" of twelve and thirteen took to putting on airs, strutting about with heads erect in their smartest uniforms every time the fair passenger appeared on deck.

Leonard Wharton, the third Lieutenant, had known the girl before he sailed from home, and had even then admired her. He was now grown to a fine muscular fellow, with the down plainly visible on his upper lip; and it was evident by Grace's manner whenever he spoke to her that she favored his attentions.

The hawk-like eye of her father enabled him to take in the situation of affairs.

After the vessel sailed from Sierra Leone he summoned the young gentleman to his presence.

"Mr. Wharton," he said, "it is best that you should not converse with Miss Manton when she is on deck. To be plain, sir, I believe in the fitness of things. She is a captain's daughter, and you are but a subaltern. Strict discipline requires that we should be very particular about these matters in the navy. Your attentions to my daughter have already excited comment in the ward room."

Wharton colored deeply.

"Sir," he stammered, "I—I will obey you; but, to be frank with you, I love your daughter, and——"

"Enough, sir," interrupted the Captain. "I will be equally frank. It would not please me for any officer under the rank of commander to pay his addresses to my child. I have lately spoken to her on this subject, so that she understands my wishes, and also my instructions for her to receive no further attentions from one of your rank."

The young man withdrew, much crestfallen. Years might elapse before he was promoted, and meanwhile Grace might become the bride of another.

As he sadly repaired to the upper deck, he noticed that the officers there had their glasses pointed shoreward. The vessel was becalmed about two miles from the coast, with the mouth of a broad stream, the Rio Grande, plainly in sight. Paddling swiftly to and fro in canoes, near a bend of the river, among the ow rocks to the eastward of the Bissagos Islands, were a few natives, evidently much excited, and in quest of something.

The Captain soon came up, when his curiosity was also aroused.

"I must see what the matter is there," he said.

He ordered his gig to be lowered, and Wharton went with him. The young man had sprung into the boat after the crew were in their places, when he heard Grace pleading with her father to be allowed to go, too. There she stood in the gangway, her lovely eyes shining and her cheeks aglow with curiosity. The Captain at first objected to her going, but he finally gave in.

As soon as she was seated in the gig near her parent, the light craft was started on its way. It was soon near one of the canoes, from the bow of which projected several harpoons, with a long rope attached to each. On questioning the natives, the captain learned that they were looking for a large hippopotamus which they had struck up the river, but which had escaped after half-a-dozen harpoons had been planted in his body.

Having smashed one of the canoes, and killed a man in it, the monster had made toward the mouth of the river, and then had gone down, since which the hunters had seen nothing of him.

By this time, they had concluded to abandon the search for the present; so, heading their canoes for the river, they soon disappeared round a projecting point.

The order now was given for the gig to be turned back toward the ship, and the craft, pulled swiftly, was passing between two low flat rocks twenty feet apart, when, about half a fathom ahead, the captain detected a large, dark mass beneath the calm surface of the water.

"Port!" he shouted quickly to the coxswain; but, ere he could be obeyed, the boat struck the object violently, and was almost capsized. Immediately the water parted, and then, with a gurgling roar, an enormous hippopotamus, not less than eleven feet long, reared its head and uncouth proportions from the sea, close to the gig.

The bristling snout, the huge wide mouth, armed with teeth nearly a foot in length, the fiery bloodshot eyes, the bulky body, the tough hide wrinkled about the short, thick neck, with broken shells, mud, and sand adhering to it, gave to this monster a truly hideous aspect, which was heightened by the harpoons projecting from one of its sides, and by the coils of line entangled about its form.

Grace, with a cry of terror, clung to her father, who shouted:

"Quick, my lads! break away from it! It is that ugly fellow that escaped the natives!"

The men had not pulled five strokes when then the brute made a dash for the boat. The captain drew his sword, and struck at the pursuing animal, but the blade made but little impression on the tough hide, and soon, the point catching in it, a twitch of the powerful form snapped the weapon in twain.

The creature was now almost upon the unarmed crew, when Leonard Wharton, seizing an oar, endeavored to thrust it down the throat of the beast. But the latter, with a roar of fury, crushed the wood to splinters, and defiantly tossed it from him. Wharton then seized the boat's hatchet, but ere he could deal a blow the enormous teeth closed over the bow of the gig, crashing through it as if it had been pasteboard, while the powerful form dashed against the side of the light craft, and capsized it in a moment.

The captain, assisted by the young lieutenant, swam with Grace to the smallest and nearest of the two rocks already mentioned, which was now only a few fathoms distant, while the crew struck out for the larger one. As they helped Grace upon the rock they had reached, the girl's father and his assistant saw the hippopotamus making straight towards them, dashing the water from his broad breast, and snorting with fury, his mouth wide open, with some of the boat's splinters adhering to his terrible fangs.

"We are lost!" cried Grace.

A look of agony came over the Captain's face, as he threw a protecting arm about his only child and hastily glanced about him, vainly trying to think of some way to save her.

A cutter had been lowered from the ship and was rapidly approaching but as it was still about a hundred fathoms distant, it could not reach the rock in time for a rescue.

Young Wharton laid a hand on the boat's hatchet, which he had thrust into his belt, and with a look of cool resolution on his embrowned visage, he said—

"Captain Manton, I will save your daughter."

"You cannot, sir. That hatchet will be as a mere toy to such a monster."

"I will save Miss Manton, sir, if I have to die to do it!" replied the young fellow.

He threw off his cap, his jacket, and his shoes; then he sprang into the sea, boldly swimming to meet the animal which was approaching.

When within a few feet of it, he drew his hatchet and hurled it at the creature's head, which it struck. then as he had expected, the attention of the infuriated beast was wholly drawn to himself, and now, as he made to the cutter, it pursued him.

The youth was a powerful swimmer, but he was no match for the hippopotamus, which, though disabled by the harpoons sticking in its body, and a little encumbered by the entangling lines attached to the weapons, gained on the young sailor.

"Brave boy! noble boy!", cried the captain.

"Yes, papa; but I fear he will sacrifice himself to save us!" Grace anxiously replied. "Ah, there!—he is gone!" she suddenly shrieked, as the uncouth pursuer, close upon Wharton, made a dash for him.

But the latter dived, and when he came up he was several fathoms to the right of the monster. Bellowing with rage, it turned towards him, and straining every muscle, he kept on swimming for his life.

A veritable swim for life it was, and it was only by the most tremendous exertions—by alternately diving and changing his course—that he was enabled to avoid his pursuer. But his efforts to escape became weaker.

The cutter's crew worked manfully at the oars to reach him, while their officers shouted encouragement to him.

At last he found himself within ten fathoms of the cutter, but the brute behind him was so near that he was again obliged to dive. The monster went swooping down after him, and this time, when he rose, he found his terrible pursuer close to him. Exhausted as he was, Wharton endeavored to swim to one side, knowing that the animal could not very quickly turn its unwieldy proportions; but ere he could strike out, the hippopotamus, with a hoarse bellow, reared itself to spring at the youth and bite his body in two, when the roar of the swivel in the cutter was heard, and the ball struck the huge beast on the neck.

Injured and confused though it was by the shot, yet, owing to the resistance of its remarkably tough hide, it was not killed. With a loud snort it turned slowly, then it swam confusedly to and fro, until another ball came from the swivel, and crashed through the bones of its head, shortly putting an end to its struggles.

A minute later Wharton was helped into a boat, much exhausted, after which the cutter was directed to the captain and his daughter, who were soon taken aboard. As the vessel was steered for the other rock, to pick up the gig's crew, the captain cordially grasped the young lieutenant's hand.

"You have done well. Mr. Warton, and I shall never forget it," he cried.

"He should be rewarded, papa," said Grace.

"A naval officer wants no reward for a brave act," answered her father.

"How, then, can we reward him?"

"Recommend him for promotion," said Grace softly, with downcast eyes.

"So be it! He certainly deserves it," replied the captain, with a covert smile, for he well knew why this promotion would please his daughter.

A few months later, Wharton received his commission as a commander, when, as Grace had foreseen, her father no longer opposed the young man's wishes to be a suitor for her hand.

In time, the lovely girl became his wife, and thus, with his promotion, and the winning of a coveted bride, was he doubly rewarded for so gallantly averting from the young lady and her father the fangs of one of the most terrible monsters, by his daring deed.—Saturday Evening Post.

A Hindu Gold Bug.

The ancient annual ceremony of "Talabbaram," or weighing the Maharajah of Travancore against an equivalent weight of gold, has come round again. It appears to have been conducted this year with great pomp and ceremony, for the present Maharajah is a Hindu of the orthodox type, who aspires to keep up the traditions of his house. Some months before the ceremony the government purchased, through its commercial agent at Alleppey, about 2,000 pounds weight of pure gold, the greater part of which was converted into coins for this purpose. After presenting an elephant and offerings to the Shrine, the Mahavajah entered the building prepared for the occasion, and, having completed the preliminary ceremonies, mounted one of the scales. The sword and shield were laid in his lap; in the other side of the scale gold coins, struck for the occasion, were placed by the first and second princes till it touched the ground and the Maharajah rose in the air, the priest meanwhile chanting Vedic hymns. Volleys were fired, the band played, and the troops presented arms. The Maharajah worshiped at the shrine and then went to the palace. Subsequently the Dewan and other officials distributed the coins from the gates to about 15,000 Brahmins.—London News.

Plead for the Sparrows.

The sparrow is a business bird. His note is like the click of a ticker and his favorite nesting-place is naturally the Board of Trade building. It is said that he is pugnacious and drives the song birds away. There were not many bobolinks on State Street before he came, nor many nightingales rising from the litter of the pavements, nor many robins singing on the telegraph wires for rain. His garb is a plain business brown, serviceable and warranted not to show dirt. You can't write much of a poem about him, but he is a bird and the only one we have. He finishes off the metropolitanism of the city as no other bird could do—or would. He is entirely congruous. He gives you the impression that he can take care of himself, that he couldn't be bunkoed. The difference between him and the birds of the field is exactly that between the men and women who crowd the streets and those who live in country places close to nature. Let him live!—Chicago Herald.

Mails in Early Days.

Boston's first newspaper, the News-Letter, contains the following advertisement, which is an exact copy of the original spelling, capitalization, etc.

"By order of the Post-Master General of North America: These are to give Notice, That on Monday night, the Sixth of this instant, December, the Western Post, Between Boston and New York, sets out at once a Fortnight the Three Winter Months of December, January and February, and to go Alternately from Boston to Saybrook and Hartford to Exchange the Mayles of letters with the New York Ryder on Saturday night the 11th Currant. And the second turn He sets out at Boston on Monday Night the 20th Currant to meet the New York Ryder at Hartford on Saturday night the 25th Currant to Exchange Mayles. And all persons that send Letters from Boston to Connecticut from and after the 13th Instant are Hereby Notified to pay the Postrates on the same."

When a man has three pairs of shoes at one time, one of them red, he may be referred to as a thoroughbred.

No man ever finds out that he lives in the dark until he has seen the sun.

"Think o' Yer Mither!"

Lord Nelson is reported to have said that "he never knew what fear was." But scores of brave men have known that terrible sensation and have risen above it. Courage in certain persons is an instinct, but in the majority of brave men it is a moral creation.

The Rev. J. C. Young tells, in his Journal, a story illustrating the fact that a mother's influence can create courage in her son, even though he is "a coward on instinct."

The boy, 18 years of age, behaved with such conspicuous bravery in his first battle with the Russians, at the Alma, as to attract the attention of a newspaper correspondent. The mother read the published letter, and wrote to her son calling him her "hero boy." The son replied with the frank confession that had it not been for a Sergeant-major, and the thought of his mother, he should have run away. He wrote:

"When I first saw the Russian guns opening fire, I felt disposed to run away. I felt that I was a born coward. My knees knocked together; I looked over my shoulder to see how the land lay behind me. Suddenly I felt a strong hand between my shoulder-blades, and heard a kindly voice, in broad Scotch, say:

" 'Come, laddies—forward move! Forward! Duty, aye, duty!'

"Encouraged by the tone of friendly expostulation, and by the brave bearing of our old Sergeant-major, I felt as if a new backbone had been put into me. I went on with redoubled courage; but as I drew nearer, and saw more of the ghastly effect of shot and shell, I again found myself looking over my shoulder.

"Instantly the same hand was at my back, and I heard: 'Eh, sirs! Come, come, laddie; ye've done vera weel. Forward then! Duty's the word—aye, duty! Come, then—I'm just proud o' ye!'

"Inspired to deserve his good opinion, I put forth all my energy until the man on my right and the other on my left were shot down. This was too much for my coward heart. I turned round to fly. But both my shoulders were seized in an iron grip, and these words hissed in my ears:

" 'Fie, fie, laddie! Think o' yer mither!'

"Wrought up by your dear name, I sprung forward, rushed into the thick of the battle, and I hope, bore myself as a soldier should."

Sundowners.

In Australia, "sundowner" is but another name for tramp, and is applied to the wandering shearer out of work from the cleverness with which he times his movements so as to arrive at a station at or about sunset. Thus arriving, he claims hospitality, and receives it ungrudgingly in the shape of a supper and breakfast and a bunk in the station outhouse over night, the owners well knowing that refusal would probably be followed by the firing of their barns or the slaughter of the fattest sheep in some distant "paddock," the word being applied in Australia to any field, whatever its dimensions, instead of signifying a restricted enclosure, as in England. Refreshed by sleep, the "sundowner" shoulders his "swag" again in the morning, and takes his desirable guestship to the next station. If, as often happens, the stations are too far apart to allow him to pass from one to the other in a single day, the shearer tramp is in no whit dismayed. He turns aside to some hollow or thicket which offers shelter, sets up a "break-wind" of wattle-boughs to protect him from the night-breezes, and, lying down in his blanket before a blazing fire of odor distilling gum branches, sleeps the sleep of the just.

If the harsh criticism or unfavorable opinion of your act that comes to you, awakens quick resentment and a desire to retaliate, it is an evidence that conscience joins in the accusation. He who is innocent can always afford to be calm.

This is the time of the year when the butterfly people dance and sing, and turn up their noses at the perspiring ants.

Kindly Done

Many odd and amusing stories are told of the clever French critic, Jules Janin, and his friends. None is more pleasing, or more to their credit, than one in which Janin, Theodore Burette, the historian, and Leon Satayes, the composer, author and critic, figured. One of Janin's best friends was an old aunt who sent him to school when he was a boy, kept house for him, and took good care of him when he, a young man, was making his reputation, but not much money, in literature.

It was, perhaps, in memory of her that he made a protegee of a poor old woman whom he noticed one day in the street. He placed her in a home for aged persons, and until her death, years afterward, was her thoughtful and generous friend. The good woman was very ill once, and when she was convalescing she said:

"I want to go and call on M. Janin. I must see him once more before I die."

One of the women of the institution went with her. Janin was living then at the top of a house which commanded a beautiful view of the garden of the Luxembourg. His "garret" was filled with books and pictures, but like any other garret it was reached by climbing a great many stairs. Slowly and painfully the old woman toiled up the long flights. She had to sit down often to rest. It took her nearly two hours to reach the top. Janin was breakfasting with Theodore Burette.

He received her with great cordiality and affection, and the three had a happy breakfast. The two men devoted themselves to entertaining her. They inquired all about the home, the rules, the diversions, the food, her recent illness, and listened with genial interest to all she had to say. She said good-by, and they made ready to escort her down-stairs.

"We will return your visit soon," they said, and placing themselves on either side of her, they began to descend the stairs. But the effort and excitement had been too much for the feeble old lady. Her limbs failed her, and she could not take a step.

Just then Satayes appeared on the scene. "We must carry her down," he said. So they placed her comfortably in an arm-chair. Janin and Burette, who were small men, took the back, Satyes took the front, and they went down flight after flight of many-storied house, breathless but cheerful.

"Well, my good woman," gasped Satayes, "I don't know of any queen who has a carriage like yours."

The three literary workers were hardly in training for their achievement, but they placed her safe and sound on the sidewalk, and saw her go away with her attendant, her old heart deeply touched and pleased with the attentions she had received.

Nothing Wasted.

In Paris nothing is wasted, not the smallest scrap of paper; that which every one else throws away here becomes a source of profit. Old provision tins, for instance, are full of money; the lead soldering is removed and melted down into cakes, and the tin goes to make children's toys. Old boots, however bad, always contain in the arch of the foot at least one sound piece that will serve again, and generally there are two or three others in the sole, the heel, and at the back. Scraps of paper go to the cardboard factory, orange peel to the marmalade maker, and so on. The ideas suggested are not always agreeable, and to see a rag-picker fishing orange peel out of the basket is enough to make one forswear marmalade: but there is worse than that. The most valuable refuse—that which fetches two francs the kilo—is hair; the long goes to the hair-dressers, while the short is used, among other things, for clarifying oils.

Deer Park in Missouri.

Three thousand acres of wild land were recently fenced in to a height of sixteen feet in Missouri. A large number of deer were inclosed without their knowledge, and it is proposed to keep them there the rest of their lives.